Lawyer To Sue The FBI For Victims' Mothers?

ATLANTA (UPI) — Author-attorney Mark Lane, whose previous clients have included James Earl Ray and the Rev. Jim Jones, says the mothers of some of Atlanta's 26 murdered black children want him to sue the FBI for defamation.

The suit would ask for monetary damages and for a restraining order to stop FBI agents from speaking publicly about the case, he said.

The request stems from a statement made at a civic club meeting last month in Macon by FBI agent Mike Twibell, who among other things said "some of those kids were killed by their parents."

Lane said Monday he was originally contacted by Venus Taylor, mother of Angel Lenair, one of two girls among the 26 victims. Since then, he said about 10 other mothers have asked if they could join the suit.

"In the middle of these terrible anguished feelings, the government has a responsibility not to add to that — not to say that the mothers in agony are also murderers," said Lane, whose practice is based in Memphis.

Lane, in the past, has represented Ray, the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Jones, who engineered the deaths of more than 900 of his followers at Jonestown, Guyana in 1978.

Lane first came to prominence with his book "Rush to Judgment," assailing the Warren Commission's finding that President John F. Kennedy was killed by a single sniper.

In another development Monday, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference said it was closing out its Children's and Families Fund that has been accepting donations for the victims' families.

The Rev. John Sharp, co-chairman of the foundation, said it had become awkward to "deal with the funds in a way which all parents felt was equitable and fair. It was hard to tell what the needs are. Some wanted us to divide it up equally, but needs are not always equal.

"It is hard for us to know when to do, what to do, for whom to do. We have had to go out of business because it is so difficult."

Sharp said the fund had accepted $102,027.91 in donations between March 9 and April 24.